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TAGS: PREL MARR JO
SUBJECT: GOJ VIEWS ON NATO COOPERATION

REF: 06 AMMAN 7992

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: A mid-level MFA official said the GoJ was "positive" on the concept of a NATO security cooperation center, but Jordan will "let the concept evolve." The GoJ continues to view NATO financing as essential. The GoJ welcomes NATO's offer to establish a Partnership for Peace Trust Fund. End summary.

¶2. (C) MFA Deputy Director for European Affairs Nasser Habashneh met with poloff on January 21 for an update on Jordan's engagement with NATO and the GoJ's views on proposals for a NATO security cooperation center. Habashneh said the GoJ had established an interagency committee, including representatives from the MFA, the Jordan Armed Forces, and the General Intelligence Directorate, to assess proposals for a center. He stressed that the committee considers this a positive and a natural development from Jordan's engagement with NATO. He said, though, that the GOJ had not heard from NATO anything concrete on finding funding for the center. Habashneh noted that the recent Riga summit offered little basis for Jordan to move forward. He emphasized that Jordan did not possess the resources to fund and maintain the center itself and would continue to look to Brussels for assistance (see also reftel). Habashneh suggested that Jordan will allow the concept of a center "to evolve further" into a more concrete offer.

¶3. (C) While cautious about moving quickly to establish a security cooperation center, Habashneh warmly welcomed NATO's offer to establish a Partnership for Peace Trust Fund. He believed the trust fund would give Jordanians a "positive impression" of NATO.

¶4. (C) Comment: The GoJ welcomes NATO engagement in general. Per reftel, Jordan supports hosting the center but only if assured of NATO financial support.

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